

Baynard House
Lewis Road
Harrington Vicinity
Kent County
Delaware

HABS No. DEL-159

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Eastern Office, Division of Design and Construction
143 South Third Street
Philadelphia 6, Pennsylvania

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BAYNARD HOUSE

Address: Lewis Road, approximately 1.3 miles north of
of Burrsville, Maryland; Harrington, Delaware
vicinity, Kent County, Delaware

Present Owner: Edmund Hurd, Harrington, Delaware

Present Occupant: William Grant

Present Use: Residence

Brief Statement An almost untouched example of a mid- to late-
of Significance: 18th century country Georgian house.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Excerpt from the draft for Harold Donaldson Eberlein's forthcoming book on early Delaware architecture given to HABS March 7, 1962, by Mr. Eberlein. Mr. Eberlein is a member of the HABS Advisory Board and an author:

John Baynard (who died about 1708) and his son Thomas were Quakers of substantial means, who came to Kent County in the early days of the Penn régime. When Thomas, or his heir, built the first part of the house ---- somewhere about 1735, according to tradition --- he built at a spot now almost on the Maryland line. Tradition also says the second or northern part of the house was added about 1785.

There was due regard to such architectural elegance as was compatible with Quaker principles ---- exterior plain, devoid of any embellishment; interior with exceptionally handsome panelling and other woodwork. . . .

It is a two-storey-and-attic four-bay structure facing north, with the remains of a detached kitchen connected with the c. 1735 portion by a covered way. The exterior is sheathed with horizontally-laid overlapping and moulded weatherboards. This feature of construction, however, is invisible thanks to a major misfortune ---- a coating of mustard-coloured fake-masonry from top to bottom which completely conceals the wooden exterior.

The fine surrounding trees somewhat mitigate the forlorn looks of Baynard, but it is all too evident that for a long time past owners have not lived there or apparently taken any interest in the condition and aspect of the house. Fortunately, the house itself is structurally sound.

Of the rectangular area within the four walls, the parlour and the hall take up the whole north or front (c. 1785) part of the house. In the rectangular, almost square hall at the northeast corner, one of the finest stairs in Delaware ascends by successive, continuous flights from the ground floor to the attic.

The parlour, accounting for the rest of the north front, has exceptionally fine panelling and woodwork. Flanking the chimney-breast are fluted pilasters, from floor to cornice. Curiously enough, the oblong panel directly over the fireplace is framed with dog-ears at the top but has none at the bottom. Beyond the chimney-breast, in the northwest corner is a well-fashioned china-cupboard with coved top. The dado is topped by a moulded chairrail, but the spaces beneath the windows are panelled, the panelling flanked by narrow fluted pilasters extending from the skirting to the bottom of the window sills, while the rest of the space between skirting and chairrail is merely plastered in the manner of the day --- an unusual treatment that helps to stress decorative values where the wall structure is not thick enough to admit of panelled window seats. The deep wooden cornice is vigorously moulded and has a "wall-of-Troy" course instead of dentils. It is gratifying to find the tenant appreciative and taking an intelligent interest in the fine woodwork throughout the house.

The dining-room (now the kitchen) and a bedroom fill the south (c. 1735) part of the structure's rectangular area ---- dining-room back of parlour, bedroom back of stair hall. Woodwork in both rooms is excellent. The closed stair winding up at one corner of the dining-room, now kitchen (making two stairs in one moderate-sized house), indicates that the plan was derived from the traditional pattern explained elsewhere [REC: Resurrection Manor plan] ---- the "great room," closed stair, and "added" rooms.

Upstairs, the bedrooms, also well-panelled, have diminutive fireplaces and the panelling there has been designed to fit them appropriately into the scheme.

At one time the detached frame kitchen was reached by a covered passage from the dining-room. The great fireplace and the big brick chimney have tumbled down; the brick chimney (at left of picture) is of modern contrivance. The verandah is modern. Original covered way to kitchen shows on plan.

In the detached kitchen where the great fireplace and the big brick chimney have tumbled down, leaving one side of the roof hanging unsupported, the solid brick wall now holding up the roof is of very recent construction. There is excellent brickwork at the two sides of the kitchen fireplace-end. The rest of the kitchen exterior is covered with overlapping moulded weatherboards over half-timber construction. Probing west of the detached kitchen has shown there were two small separate buildings, doubtless a milk house and meat house.

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The weatherboard walls of the detached kitchen, indeed, supplied the evidence to determine the wall structure of the c. 1735 part of the house, only one small section of which escaped the jacket of "smear-masonry" sheets. The still invisible actual walls of c. 1785 part of the house are probably of the same construction as the earlier part.

At my last visit, a sheet of the fake-masonry had partly detached from the 1785 part of the house, showing the above surmise was correct.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement

1. Architectural character: An unpretentious country house with rather unrefined woodwork inside. According to H. D. Eberlein (above) the plan of the present dining room and first floor bedroom are typical of the area, having come from Maryland.
2. Condition of fabric: Fair.

B. Technical Description of Exterior

1. Overall dimensions (including modern additions): 54'2" x 40'3"
 - a. Main House: 35'5" x 30'3"
 - b. Summer kitchen: 16'2" x 15'7"
2. Foundations: Brick
3. Wall construction:
 - a. Main House: 3" x 4" studs about 24" on center with horizontal sheathing and molded clapboards.
 - b. Summer kitchen: Nogged frame, brick nogging covered with molded clapboards; end wall brick, Flemish bond.
4. Porches, stoops, bulkheads:
 - a. Rear porch: modern with wood floor, shed roof, wood posts
 - b. Front Stoop: Modern wood platform on brick piers.
 - c. Steps to summer kitchen: Brick, ruinous
 - d. Bulkhead to cellar: Brick cheeks and steps, hinged board door.

5. Chimneys:

- a. Main house: Three brick, one on north end at ridge, two on south end off ridge. All have projecting top courses.
- b. Kitchen: Modern, single flue, free standing.

6. Openings:

- a. Doors: Front door, two back doors, and summer kitchen door are six panel, molded with no lights. Door to loft over summer kitchen, board.
- b. Windows: Front elevation first floor, nine-over-nine lights, second floor, nine-over-six. South end first floor, nine-over-nine lights in parlor and six-over-six in kitchen; six-over-six lights in second and third. North end (all floors) six-over-six lights. Rear elevation (East) First floor nine-over-nine-light; second floor, nine-over-six. Windows in shed porch, modern single sash. Summer kitchen: North elevation, two-over-four lights; East elevation, small window with horizontal wooden bars (missing), no sash.
- c. Shutters: All shutters missing, pintles remain.

7. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: Gable on both main house and kitchen; shed roof on porch. Asphalt shingles except for tarpaper on summer kitchen.
- b. Cornice: Front elevation, modillion box cornice; rear elevation, plain box cornice; summer kitchen, plain box cornice with regularly spaced semicircular holes, apparently for birds.

C. Technical Description of Interior

1. Floor plans:

- a. First floor: plan rectangular, divided into approximate quarters. All rooms have fireplace on end wall excepting stair hall, which has open-newel stair; corner stair in corner of present dining room; doors in all interior walls which open into adjoining rooms. At the southeast corner of main house is a small summer kitchen with well or cistern under the wood floor.

- b. Second floor: Same as first floor except that south-east room is accessible only from kitchen below; loft over summer kitchen accessible only from open gable end (where part of building seems to have been removed).
- c. Attic: Three rooms altogether; two small on north end, one with stair, one larger on south.
- 2 Stairways: Entry hall stair rises clockwise from first floor to attic with open newel, two runs per story and quarter-turn landings; open decorated string; square straight-set spindles three per tread; paneled soffit and dado. Kitchen stair to room upstairs closed with quarter-wind and three open steps, and closed quarter-wind to basement; ceiling over three open steps is higher to accommodate opening of stair door.
3. Flooring: Boards seem to be original except in present dining room; in summer kitchen boards are from 9" to 14-1/2" wide.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: Plaster, painted or papered; in summer kitchen wall is whitewashed, brick-nogged frame with a plaster ceiling.
5. Doors: Major doors, six-panel; that to closed stair is four-panel; to cellar, two-panel, attic doors are plain four-panel with no moldings on insides.
6. Trim: All downstairs rooms have chair rails with recessed dado under each window; stairhall has plaster cornice; parlor has denticulated wood cornice; downstairs fireplace walls are paneled, parlor wall having fluted Doric pilasters, entablature with triglyphs, kneed architrave over fire opening, bracketed mantel; breast closet in parlor has arch-opening with double, hinged, lighted doors, three butterfly shelves, half-dome shell-soffit, key block and dado cabinet; present dining room has window-sill-height breast closet; first-floor bedroom has full length breast closet; entry hall has paneled stringer wall; stringer and fascias are decorated with simple, flat, wooden scrolls combined in complex patterns.
7. Hardware: All-wood box-lock on door to attic room; also iron latches in attic.
8. Lighting: Electric

9. Heating: Fireplaces all closed; oil space-heaters in two downstairs rooms.

D. SITE

1. General setting and orientation: Setting rural. Front faces west (or northwest).
2. Outbuildings: Various farm buildings distant from house.
3. Lane: Long, dirt lane leads from main road to house and around to rear.

Prepared by Robert E. Cooper, Architect
National Park Service
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